

Minutes of...Children's Network Policy Council

Details

Date: May 27, 2009

Time: noon

Place: County Government Center, 385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5th Floor Citrus Room, San Bernardino.

Attendees

- Charles Adams, Community Action Partnership
 - Rick Arden, Probation Department
 - Dr. Richard Chinnock, Loma Linda University, Pediatrics
 - Regina Coleman, County Counsel
 - Steven Couchot, TAD Administration
 - Michael Delgado, 4th District Board of Supervisors
 - Amber Dukes, Human Services Legislation and Research
 - Ron Griffin, Preschool Services Department
 - Margaret Hill, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools
 - Richard Louis, DBH
 - Karen Scott, First 5 San Bernardino
 - Marty Sellers, Children's Fund
 - Kathy Turnbull, Children's Network
 - Beatriz Valdez, Grants Coordinator – CAO
 - Trinity Wallace-Ellis, CASA
 - Kathy Watkins, Human Services Legislation and Research
 - Greg Zerovnik, San Bernardino County Library Administration
 - Norman Dollar, Children and Family Services
 - Douglas House, Victor Children's Services
 - Timothy Hougen, DBH
 - Chairman Ovitt, Fourth District Board of Supervisors
 - Denise McKinney, Children's Network
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Welcome and Introductions

Amy Cousineau welcomed everyone and self-introductions were made. **A motion was made to approve the agenda as submitted by Chairman, Gary Ovitt and seconded by Ron Griffin. A motion was made to approve the minutes as submitted by Kathy Watkins.**

**Approval Item:
Interagency
Placement
Council Policy
and Procedure**

The following highlights were given:

- You are being asked to approve the revised IPC (Interagency Placement Council) policy and procedure that is located in your agenda packet.
- IPC is represented by DBH (Department of Behavioral Health), CFS (Children and Family Services), Probation, County Superintendent of Schools and IRC (Inland Regional Center).
- The IPC meets on a weekly basis about children whom need high level placements.
- There is also some information that was amended for the Group Home approval process. The group homes are being asked to provide some specific information that they have not been asked for such as; over the past year how many kids placed in their homes are from this county and other counties.
- **A motion was made to approve this revised IPC item by Rick Arden and seconded by Ron Griffin.**

**Approve
amended
PSSF/CAPIT
contracts**

The following highlights were given:

- We are being asked to approve the amended PSSF/CAPIT (Promoting Safe Stable Families/Child Abuse Prevention Intervention Treatment) contracts.
 - CFS entered into contracts with various agencies to provide CAPIT for the last three years with the possibility of extending the contract for an additional year.
 - Services will continue through the '09/10 fiscal year. At that point, CFS will go out for new contracts to be in alignment with our SIP (System Improvement Plan) so that there will be a more coordinated and effective approach for serving children at-risk.
 - Amy reminded the group that they are the designated the CAP (Child Abuse Prevention) Council have the responsibility for the birth certificate money that is included with this request.
 - A spread sheet was distributed to show the exact amounts allocated and what agencies they go to. The amounts reflect the additional year.
 - Being no other questions. **A motion was made to approve the PSSF/CAPIT contracts as was submitted by Chairman, Gary Ovitt and seconded by Greg Zervonik.**
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**Approve/
recommend
Letter of
Support for
Victor
Treatment
Centers**

The following highlights were given:

- Amy directed everyone to the recommendation from IPC (Interagency Placement Council) recommending to the Children's Policy Council that a Letter of Support be recommended for Victor Treatment.
- Kathy Watkins stated there is a need to give some context, as this isn't really a stand alone item. There has been a planning process over many years starting with the Group Home Needs Assessment in 2006. This report is done on a bi-annual basis.
- As of the last Group Home Needs Assessment there were too many generic group home beds in this county, so that is why half of these children are being placed out of the county and state. The in county group homes did not meet the specialized needs of some children in placement.
- The beds are being filled by LA, Orange County, and Riverside County children.
- There has been some concern for many years about the mismatch of placement needs. At the same time, there was a statewide workgroup called RBS (Residential Based Services). The stakeholders from other counties had found that the basic group homes were not meeting the needs of children and families.
- There had to be a change from the warehousing children to a short-term extensive treatment approach that got children out of care and integrated with their families, and communities. This statewide effort resonated with the workgroup that sponsored legislation in 2007, AB 1453 by Assemblywoman Nell Soto.
- The Board of Supervisors, based on the Group Home Needs Assessment at the time, was a supporter of this bill. The bill was passed and chaptered. It mandated a planning process for those counties interested in transforming group home care and engages more of the community to see what it would take to do the RBS.
- A Board Agenda item will come forth soon with a recommendation that the county placing agencies CFS, DBH, Probation, and County Schools enter into the RBS pilot with the State.
- Norm reported over the last decade this body knows that there has been a decline of RCL 14 beds, five years ago we had 30 beds, and today we have 6 beds in county. This creates a tremendous dilemma for the child placing agencies, such as; CFS, DBH, Probation, and schools. Because there is such complex needs of this group, they are being placed out-of-county or out of state.
- Sometimes it is felt that many of the children are being placed out of county, out of state, and many of them start to AWOL, and in and out of psychiatric hospitals. It is extremely expensive for the county, so RBS gives an opportunity to transform group home care into a more community based, family focused connection and relationship based model.

- Youth will only be in these group homes for short time periods for assessment and stabilization so they could return to their community and family based care with various supports.
- Timothy Hougen mentioned the child will be seen by a clinician and a team of providers and anyone else that would have a critical role. The plan is when that child returns home, the core providers would still be involved.
- Norm mentioned that the integrated approach addresses some of the most problematic consequences of having high level group home placements. Children won't be disconnected, will have appropriate kinds of treatment, and that efforts are made to maintaining relationships that will move the child into long-term pro social community success.
- The other key element to this was finding a provider that has a broad range of treatment and mental health treatment expertise that could implement jointly with us as a model. There has to be a group certified to provide high level residential care, Medi-Cal services, and have the collaborative approach by working with allied agencies.
- The only provider in this county now is Victor Children Family Services the only high level treatment facility in this county.
- Our request to expand to two group homes is really couched in this entire package. The fact that we don't have enough RCL 14 treatment beds in our county is a problem. With this population over half of them are being placed out-of-state with much higher cost then California pays. So it is a drain on our budget, but it also not good for children because they are really disconnected from their families and community.
- We need additional specialized RCL 14 beds in this county. What we want to stress is this request is couched within a larger program. We are asking Victor to have these beds exclusively for San Bernardino county abused and neglected children. Secondly, these beds are exclusive to the RBS. We are really committed to transforming the care to meet the needs of our children.
- Chairman Ovitt commented he really can't take a stance on this without it going before the whole Board of Supervisors. I know location is very important when we talk about this.
- Chairman Ovitt said he is from the fourth district and definitely understands the possibility of converting a home into an RCL 14. This item will need to be discussed at the board level.
- Chairman Ovitt will abstain from this vote, but at the same time support the idea.
- Kathy Watkins commented that part of the IPC process is to look at impact to the community by law enforcement, to schools, and be very thoughtful, if the goal is to bring children back into the community they will need to be good neighbors while they are in the group home and learn good citizenship and behavior. We certainly will look at the track record of the provider, how they operate in our county now, and the impact on their neighborhood.

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- This is the first step of a multi-approval recommendation process.
 - **There is a motion for approval to recommend lifting the moratorium on group homes and second, to recommend to the CAO to send a letter of Support for Victor Treatment to open the two group homes. A motion was made by Margaret Hill and seconded by Trinity Wallace-Ellis.**
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**Children's
Network
Report**

The following highlights were given:

- Amy wanted to share that she is part of a team from the county that has been focused on the Safe Surrender Law. Some of the partners are Margaret Hill from County Schools, Karen Scott from First 5 San Bernardino, as well as Debi Faris who helped create the law, and Jaynie Boren, Hospital Administrator from San Antonio Community hospital.
 - Amy mentioned they applied and received a grant through part of a training program put on by the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The grant was funded through the Doris Duke Foundation and was aimed at child abuse prevention across the country. Last week was the second trip to North Carolina and to finalize the five year plan.
 - Amy mentioned the team looks forward to giving about a 20 minute presentation either in July or August.
 - Children's Network is partnering with many of the agencies around the table and Judge Slough to put on a college fair on August 8th at the University of Redlands for Probation and Foster Care youth. You will be getting flyers via e-mail.
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**Children's
Fund Report**

The following highlights were given:

- Marty Sellers reported for the third year in a row they received another grant from My Stuff Bags for children removed from their homes due to abuse/neglect.
 - The Sports Faire is June 19th and he thinks there are approximately 400 youth planning to attend.
 - Children's Fund is also partnering with the GREAT program (Grandparents caring for children).
 - Looking at doing a couple of sports clinics in July or August to be at the Boys and Girls Club of San Bernardino, the west end at the YWCA and the high desert as well, and still working on those dates.
 - Last year by partnering with County Schools, CFS, and Probation the Children's Fund provided almost 5,000 backpacks to students. Looking to increase distribution up to 7,500 backpacks this year.
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**Other
announcements**

- Trinity mentioned congressional recognition was bestowed to CYC (California Youth Connection) for their involvement in the Foster Youth Summit on May 9th.
- Greg Zerovnik mentioned at the end of this month, Highland Library will be celebrating first full year in business. Fontana Library just celebrated their first year anniversary by having 1 million patrons. The construction on the new Phelan Library in the high desert is proceeding very well and looking at a tentative date in August for it to open.
- Greg will be the new incoming President for the Inland Empire Chapter of the American Heart Association as of July 1. During his tenure they will reprise a presentation on Non-Profit Marketing that had been very successful and he looks forward to it sometime in the fall. Amy asked him to share the details and Children's Network will share the flyers with their non-profit partners.
- Margaret Hill mentioned that the San Bernardino County Schools Homeless program for the past three years has received \$150,000 a year.
- There was discussion about Medi-Cal and the Healthy Families possible cuts.
- San Bernardino County Veterans Affairs has been named Outstanding Department for Veterans Affairs, so they will be recognized for providing many services to our veterans.

**Key points:
Public
Comments**

None

Next Meeting

July 22, 2009 at noon, at County Government Center, 385 N. Arrowhead Ave., 5th Floor Citrus Room, San Bernardino.
GOING DARK IN JUNE.
